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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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### DOT&PF to host National Rural Intelligent Transportation Systems Conference

(JUNEAU, Alaska) – The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is this year's host for the 2008 National Rural Intelligent Transportation Systems (NRITS) Conference beginning Sept. 3 through the 5th in Anchorage.

The conference will kick off at 1 p.m., Tuesday at the Hotel Captain Cook in downtown Anchorage. The registration desk will be open for on-site registration beginning at 6 p.m. Tuesday and will remain open throughout the conference. The conference web site [www.nritsconference.org](http://www.nritsconference.org) covers many of the conference details.

DOT&PF launched the *ITS* program – known as the Iways, in 2000. *ITS* refers to the rapidly emerging transportation products, services and systems which are based on advanced technologies such as computers, communications and electronics; and which are called "*intelligent*" because their essential functions are based on attributes normally associated with intelligence - sensors, memory, communications, information processing and adaptive systems.

The NRITS 2008 conference themes are relevant to Alaska's rural transportation, including emergency medical services, traveler information, incident management, transit, and commercial vehicle operations. This year's conference highlights the impacts of climate change, especially to transportation. Burr Stewart, the Port of Seattle Strategic Planner, is one of several keynote speakers and will offer a national perspective on sustainable transportation during his address.

To officially begin the conference, DOT&PF Commissioner Leo von Scheben will provide opening remarks at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday. During his opening address, von Scheben is expected to discuss DOT&PF's current and future use of *ITS* in helping the department find creative ways to increase the safety and efficiency of our transportation systems and improve our efforts to communicate with the traveling public.

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**NRITS 2/2/2/2**

“Nationwide, rural two-lane highways are more collision prone, and this is also true in Alaska. *ITS* offers a tool to improve safety and increase system performance, which drives our interest in these technologies in rural settings,” said von Scheben.

The conference is expected to attract up to 300 attendees and host 30 vendors and nonprofit agencies during the event lasting through Friday. Continuing education units are being offered through the University of Alaska at Anchorage.

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